

## The Times-Dispatch

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TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 1908.

## FACTS ABOUT THE LIQUOR QUESTION.

We give place elsewhere to a lengthy communication from the Rev. James Cannon, Jr., in advocacy of the Mann bill. We have given more of our space to communications on this subject than we were called upon to give, but it is an interesting subject and an important subject and we want all the light that can be shed. We should not care to say anything in reply to Mr. Cannon except that his communication appears to be in answer to certain editorials which have appeared in this paper and it may therefore be assumed by some that every proposition which Mr. Cannon lays down is a proposition opposed by this paper. We think it well, therefore, once more to state our own position on the liquor question in general and on the Mann bill in particular.

In discussing this question, as in discussing all questions, we try to get at the truth. We try to ascertain what are the facts, and to keep the facts well in mind in drawing our conclusions.

First of all, then, it is a fact that alcohol is here; that it has been here from the foundation of the world, and that it will be here until all things have come to an end. Extremists say that alcohol is the creature of the devil, and that it ought to be abolished. Of course, that is an absurdity. Alcohol was made by the same Creator who created the earth and all things therein, and without which there was nothing made that was made. There is no harm, per se, in alcohol. It is a good thing in itself, and thousands and hundreds of thousands of people use it to their comfort, if not to their benefit, and never to their hurt. It ought not to be abolished.

It is no wrong, per se, to take a drink of whiskey, nor it is wrong, per se, to sell whiskey. Some of the best men and women in the world take a drink of whiskey or wine occasionally, and it is absurd to say that they commit a wrong in so doing. There are reputable merchants in all parts of Virginia who sell alcoholic liquors, and it is absurd to say that they are criminals or that they are engaged in criminal traffic.

These statements may be denied, but they cannot be disproved. They are facts and they are facts to be dealt with in considering this important subject.

Another fact to be considered is this: That man have a perfect right to drink alcoholic liquors and they cannot under our system of government be deprived of that right by law. So long as they have that right many men will demand alcoholic liquors, and where there is an extensive demand in any branch of business the supply is sure to be forthcoming.

We must assume, therefore, that as it was from the beginning, so it will be to the end, alcohol will continue to exist, men will continue to drink it, other men will continue to sell it and so it all comes around at last to the question of regulating the sale in such a way as to supply a popular demand with least offense to those who are opposed to the traffic.

Mr. Cannon, in his communication, asserts with much emphasis that a saloon is a public nuisance. If that were true there would be no need of the Mann bill or any other bill, for a public nuisance can be abated without special statutory enactment. Singularly enough, Mr. Cannon denies his own assertion. In one breath he says that a saloon is a public nuisance and in the next breath he argues in favor of the Mann bill, which provides that a judge may grant a license to conduct a saloon, under certain conditions. Of course, a judge may not grant a license to a man to conduct a nuisance under any conditions. The saloon is not, per se, a public nuisance. A saloon may be conducted in such a way as to make it a nuisance (as some of them are), in which case it should not be tolerated. No man has the right to sell liquor or to drink liquor in such a way as to create a public nuisance.

It will be observed that we are still engaged in stating facts. We are not denying that the abuse of liquor constitutes a great evil; that it is responsible for much suffering and for much crime, nor are we denying that the greatest evil of the liquor traffic is in the open saloon. These are facts also and facts to be reckoned with in considering the liquor question. But we cannot abolish alcohol and we cannot abolish the evils of alcohol. It is therefore merely a question of how to reduce these evils to the minimum. For our part we do not believe in prohibition; we do not believe in the doctrine of prohibitionists because prohibitionists are intolerant and they are undemocratic and too often they are fanatical. Nor do we believe in prohibition as an efficient means of getting rid of the liquor evil. It was tried in the State of New Hampshire for generations, and but recently it was abandoned in favor of full licenses. If it had been a remedy for the evil surely the Puritanical population of New Hampshire would never have abandoned it. But in spite of all that, we believe in local self-government, and we are willing that each

and every community shall decide this question for itself. If the dominant sentiment in any community is in favor of abolishing the saloon, we are willing for our part that the majority shall rule, and were such a law in force in the community in which we live, we should obey it and uphold it. But we do not believe that it is wise to attempt to enforce any law which is not backed by public sentiment. To do so, is to tempt men to evade and defy the law, and that is more demoralizing than the evil which it is sought to abolish. Our main objection to the Mann bill is that it is not a fair means of ascertaining public sentiment, and we are clearly of the opinion that it is in violation of the spirit, at least, of the suffrage clause of the Constitution, which provides that all elections shall be by secret ballot. To circulate a petition under the provisions of the Mann bill would be to all intents and purposes to hold a local option election, and the object of an election is to ascertain the honest sentiment of the people voting. In many instances you fail to get at the honest sentiment of a voter unless you put him in a private booth and let him make out his ballot without the eye of man upon him. It is one thing to vote in secret and quite another to sign a petition which will be filed as a matter of court record.

## PARK IMPROVEMENTS.

It is gratifying to find the City Council committees paying more than usual attention to park improvements. We know of no other direction in which the surplus money of the city—when it has any—may be expended to better advantage. Each one of the parks needs money, and should have it from time to time as the finances of the city will permit. They are the pleasure gardens of the people, and are growing in favor and are used more and more. Last summer the attendance at these parks was something extraordinary for a city of our size.

Especially was this true with respect to the New Reservoir Park. These grounds are large, and accessible from all directions, and constitute a resort which is much appreciated now and will be of infinite service to the people in the years to come. Money may be well expended there in improving the walks, drives and lakes, and in setting out trees and shrubs. But the great need of the place is a house of public comfort—a spacious pavilion fitted up nicely for the use of men, women and children; a place of refuge in case of rain, and a house fit to go to on any occasion. Nothing of the sort has yet been attempted here. There is a pavilion used by the musicians, but neither in situation nor architecture is it suited to the purposes we indicate.

It may not be possible for the Council to provide for this improvement this season, but it should keep it in mind and see to it that before long such a building is erected in a good location, and with such architectural advantages and arrangements as to make it a credit to the city. Chimborazo Park is also in need of such a building.

Really, the loveliest part of Reservoir Park is on the river side at and about the new pump house. The river scenery there is picturesque and the shade refreshing, but the spot is not now easily accessible, except to people who have vehicles in which to drive. In the hot summer time few persons care to undertake a walk from the end of the street car line to the pump house.

That charming spot, instead of being visited by hundreds of people, ought to be visited by thousands, and the time will come when it will be. What is needed is a continuation of the street car line down to the canal bank. But the problem is to extend the tracks without marring the drive or walks, and without interference with important park improvements that are already designed. It would, however, seem possible to extend the tracks southward down Robertson Street until they reach the river, possibly a route could be found between Shields' house and the main body of the Reservoir grounds that would not interfere at all with carriage driving or pedestrianism.

This is a matter to which we invite attention. We should be gratified to have it considered. In a few years there will be a large lake in Shields' woods. Already much work has been done upon it—and the people will wish to visit that lake as well as the pump house. The street car line, which we have suggested, would give access to both—all the more reason, therefore, why the City Council and the street car people, in planning future improvements, should give weighty consideration to this scheme.

After Bostock has gone and taken his collection of wild animals away with him, there will be a great zoological dearth on the Reservoir grounds. Hence it is opportune to suggest now that it would be well for the community to take steps to provide a small sized "Zoo" for a permanent stay there. Most great city parks have such collections of animals. Why should not Richmond have one? Why, indeed?

## HOW TO RUN A DEAL.

Whitaker Wright, who, until lately, was the friend of the King of England, and a millionaire, with lordly country estates, gorgeous yachts, etc., now a prisoner in a New York jail awaiting proceedings to return him to England, there to be tried for falsifying financial statements, has told his story to the newspaper men. He says: "The moral of it is, if you want to run a successful deal on the stock market, take no one into your confidence." "Whenever," he added, "I have taken others into my confidence I have generally come out the wrong end of the horn."

It also appears that thousands of people on the other side of the water have "come out of the other end of the horn" because of trusting in the statements made under the signatures of Mr. Wright and his board of directors, who financed various South African gold-mining properties.

Wright is an American. It really seems that he hasn't saved a shilling of all the many millions of pounds that he handled.

It is, however, doubtful if he can be convicted of fraud, nor indeed is it certain that the British Government will push him too hard, inasmuch as noble names are involved with him in the prospectus that fooled the British public so badly, and cost many of them so much money.

The speech of Senator Morgan on the canal question has been published in the Congressional Record, and takes ninety-seven pages. It will average 4,000 words to the page, making about 388,000 words. The Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald, who has figured on it, estimates that the speech would make a larger book than General Grant's memoirs, or a book about half as large as the Bible. This speech is remarkable, not so much because of its contents, but because of the age of the man who delivered it. Mr. Morgan is seventy-nine years old, and although he is in excellent health and has a vigorous constitution, to speak four or five hours a day for five days is an ordeal which few men in the full vigor of early manhood could endure. It is also remarkable because the Senator used very few notes. He made frequent references to published reports and other documents from which he quoted freely, but the speech was purely extemporaneous, and the Senator did not have even a skeleton of the topics to guide him. He is very familiar with his subject. No man living has given so much study to Isthmian canals, and, having a remarkable memory, he is able to discuss any point in the complicated problem without reference to his authorities. He has probably read more than once every line that has ever been printed concerning a canal across the Isthmus, but with all that information within grasp very few men could have marshaled the facts and figures and arguments as he did or sustained such a test of physical endurance.

We have been asked why it is necessary to guard the levees along the flooded Mississippi, to protect them from vandals who would cut the banks down and turn the raging waters upon the lands, destroying property and endangering lives, and if it is true that there are people who would cut the levees, and if so, what is their object. Yes, there are people who cut the levees and they are not necessarily very mean people either. They are acting upon the principle that self-protection is the first law of nature. "The object of men in cutting the levees," explains the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, "is to lower the water on the other side of the river, where their cabins are, by letting it spread out on the low land on the opposite side. Many of the dwellers on one side of the river are in districts unprotected by a levee. They want the flood disaster fairly divided; they consider the question in the same light as the man whose neighbor has elevated his lawn two feet, so that all the drainage runs off on the lawn of the man lower down. They reason that the back water wouldn't be five miles or more wide on the Tennessee side if the Arkansas side would take part of it—and vice versa. It is not difficult to see their chain of reasoning, though its application would destroy the productive powers of millions of acres. Armed guards now patrol the levees to prevent cutters slipping across the river in the darkness and making even a little trench which would soon grow into a roaring crevasse. These guards are farmers of the bottoms and they willingly serve without pay. The levees front for miles can be patrolled as the railroad is in Russia when the Czar travels, but without anything like the expense."

Two interesting announcements come from London. One is that Mrs. Maybrick is to be released next year, and the other is that "Jack-the-Ripper" has been found.

The first announcement in no news to the readers of The Times-Dispatch, for it was made in this paper some time ago, although a sort of half-way, semi-official denial was sent out from London. It is none the less gratifying, however, to have our news officially confirmed. Mrs. Maybrick may be guilty; but the case against her was never proven, and, having been severely punished, we are glad that she is to be set at liberty.

As for the other report, we are all equally gratified to know that Jack-the-Ripper has been caught, and that he is to get the punishment he deserves. The story is that a Pole named Klossowski, who has been going by the name of George Chapman, and who was recently convicted of murder and sentenced to be hung, is none other than the man who ran the Whitechapel district wild in 1888 by ripping the life out of women on the street. Murder will out.

Where to get laborers for work upon the Panama Canal is a question that is being discussed already. The best opinion seems to favor Jamaica negroes. It is thought they can withstand the climate of the Isthmus, which is fatal to most other non-acclimated people. It is thought, too, that by the application of modern methods of sanitation the mortality in the camps of whites and blacks, both can be largely reduced. It is not supposed that the negro of our Southern States, or the Chinaman, would be as healthy, or as reliable, a laborer as the colored Jamaican.

One of the G. A. R. posts of Washington has instituted a movement looking to the removal of the remains of General George H. Thomas to Arlington, so that they may lie "beneath the soil of his native State." This same camp is also urging Union veterans to raise money with which to erect a grand monument to Thomas, but whether they purpose putting it over his grave, or on the field of Chickamauga, or elsewhere, is not stated.

Andrew Carnegie is one citizen of New York who does not dodge his taxes. He is to be assessed on \$5,000,000 personality and \$2,000,000 realty, which will bring him an annual tax bill of just about \$100,000.

The Postmaster-General has issued an order threatening the dismissal of subordinates who are chronic debtors. He is tired of having the corridors of a department made the waiting place of collectors who apply to see employees who decline to be seen. His action is commendable.

Most Virginians love Virginia until their State taxes are due and then their affection cools.

"It's up to you," says the raging James to the city of Richmond.

Keep your eye skinned. A week from to-morrow will be All Fools' Day.

The vernal equinox is entirely overdoing the business this year.

Real estate in Columbia will soon be moving.

Anyhow, Richmond is having just as good weather as any of its neighbors.

James River and Eastern bonnets are very high.

Personal and General.

John D. Rockefeller has made an additional gift of \$50,000 to Denison University, of Granville, Ohio.

A Vienna dentist reports having made considerable success with artificial teeth made of paper treated by a process of his own invention.

Miss Helen Gould will defray the expenses of Dr. William H. Tolman's trip to Europe to study conditions in the principal cities and collect material illustrative of economic progress in various municipalities.

Lloyd C. Griscom, of Philadelphia, United States Minister to Japan, has presented to the State Department two lithographic copies of the original Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

In a Berlin insane asylum is a patient, it is said, whose hair changes color with her temperature. When she is cool and quiet her hair is a light yellow, but when she is restless and excited it becomes auburn.

By a Dutch process lately discovered it is claimed that a moleat, hide can be turned into leather ready for the saddler's or shoemaker's use in from two to three days.

The same operation of six months for the same operation.

Judge John H. Reagan, the surviving member of Jefferson Davis' Confederate Cabinet, recently sat for a portrait to be painted and placed in the Confederate Museum of History in this city.

Half Hour With Virginia Editors.

The Norfolk Ledger is going to do great work on Arbor Day, it says.

For very many years the forests of our State have been steadily disappearing, and the present is an excellent time to commence making preparations to systematically plant trees every season. The Western States have derived large benefits from the observance of Arbor Day, and Virginia will also be greatly benefited by following their example. Governor Montague did well in setting apart a day in April for the general planting of trees.

The Lexington Gazette wants primaries legalized, it says.

We all know that the primaries in Virginia decide who shall be our officers rather than the regular elections, and it is equally important to have the Barksdale bill applied to such. The triumph for honest electors will be complete with legalized primaries.

The Harrisonburg Free Press says:

The United States Senate has gone to an extreme in its application of the principle of unanimity in the case of the negro to the opposite extreme in its application of closure. What the country hopes to see is a modification of both methods.

The Staunton News wants no redistricting of the State, it says.

The Cumming redistricting bill, that poor little infant whose walls created so much disturbance some weeks ago, has at last succumbed, despite the ministrations of the ton eminent physicians who attended it. Since it has gone to the place provided for all defunct legislative papers, let us say "peace to its ashes."

The Real Thing.

"And, what is this?" asked he for- elner, who was doing New York.

"This," replied the native, "was showing him the signs of 'the Wall Street.'"

"For what is it noted?" asked the visitor.

"For its fame as a watering place," answered the native, winking his off eye.—Chicago Daily News.

HOSTETTER'S

Run Down and in need of a tonic. Most everybody does in the Spring. Take an occasional dose of the Bitters. It will purify the blood, and keep the system and headache.

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only let him be sure his rule applies equally to high and low.

What a pity our friends over in North Carolina can't keep their shooting nests at home. The Haywood trial will be called to-day in Raleigh.

The manufacturers of spades and pick-axes are looking hopefully to the Colombian Congress which is yet to wrestle with the canal treaty.

The Albemarle peach trees and the man who hurried to remove his winter flannels are in something of a nervous state about now.

The Missouri minister who declares his purpose to hereafter tell the truth and the whole truth at funerals is receiving no calls from vacant pulpits.

It is said that the activity of Candidate Longino has much to do with inspiring the great speech of Senator Money.

Colorado's cold wave started east in great shape, but it got hung up on the way, much to the delight of the east.

This is a good time for Buchanan to ship her surplus drift wood to Lynchburg, Richmond and other markets.

The croakers that were shipped here from Old Point are not the only ones in town.

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